

Hebrews 1:6 in the Navajo Bible

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Áádóó náá'áldó', Diyin God éí áltse yizhchíinii nahasdzáán yikáa'gi yiní'á'dáá' ání, Bini'dii Diyin God bidingo nidaal'a'í t'áá ałtso bich'í' nidahaáa doo. (Hebrews 1:6)¹

And again, when God brings his firstborn into the world, he says, "Let all God's angels worship him." (Hebrews 1:6)²

Introduction

The verse we are studying says, "Let all God's angels worship him" (above), i.e., worship God's "firstborn," Jesus. Why? Why does God want the angels to worship His Son and what does this tell us about the Son? For that matter, what does it tell us about the angels? Notice, God does not merely allow the angels to worship His Son, but asks that they do so.

The only valid reason for worship under any circumstances is creatorship. So there can be only one reason why God wants the angels to worship His Son. He made them. If God had not made the angels through His Son, then it would be idolatrous for angels to worship Him. The fact that God tells the angels to do this shows conclusively that it is not idolatrous for them to worship the Son.

In this verse God tells the angels, The baby you see here (in the manger) is the same holy Being through whom I made you initially. He is the reason you're here. He might look different now, because of taking human flesh, but He is actually the same. Taking human flesh did not change the Son's relationship to the Father. It changed His appearance, because now He looks like us, but it did not change who He was.

God Made All Things Through His Son

John 1:3 and other passages³ make clear that God's Son is one with the Father – the Creator of all things. "Through him all things were made; without him nothing was

¹ Navajo Bible quotations are from *Diyin God Bizaad. The Holy Bible in Navajo*. Revised edition. New York: American Bible Society, 2000.

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³ See Colossians 1:15-19; Hebrews 1:1-3. The passage from Colossians could be taken the wrong way. The key to understand vs. 15 is vs. 16. "For by him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things were created by him and for him. (vs. 16). This verse begins with the word "for," i.e., "because." Verse 16 explains vs. 15. What does it mean for Christ to be "the firstborn over all creation" (vs. 15b)? It means that "by him all things were created" (vs. 16a). The reason why vs. 16 begins with the word "For" is to clarify this point. The meaning of vs. 15 is clarified in vs. 16.

made that has been made" (John 1:3). This can't mean, "without [the Father] nothing was made that has been made," although that would also be true. Instead the meaning is, "without [the Son] nothing was made that has been made." This has to be the meaning because of one word – the word "through": "Through him [through the Son] all things were made" (vs. 3a).

If we said, "through [the Father] . . .," how would we finish the sentence? Who is over and above the Father, making all things "through him"? Such an interpretation, which begins as an attempt to protect the uniqueness of God, actually has the opposite effect. Let the verse say what it says. The Father made all things. On this all agree. One example (not the only one) of *how* He made all things has to do with our own world. When the Father made our world, He made it "through" His Son (see Hebrews 1:1-3). What does this mean? It means that the words, "Let there be light" (Genesis 1:3), expressing the will of the Father, were pronounced by the Son. "Without him [the Son] nothing was made that has been made" (John 1:3).

If this is not sufficient reason for worship, what is? If God made the angels through His Son, it is right that they should worship Him. And if He made us through His Son, it is right that we should worship Him as well. Both the angels and we should worship the Son – to the glory of God the Father.

Worshiping the Father and the Son

Worshiping the Son takes nothing away from the Father. If this doesn't seem to make sense, well, that's why we need Scripture to guide us. In Scripture God reveals things to us that we would not be able to grasp by intuition. In Scripture He brings us to conclusions we would not have arrived at otherwise. If we could, what need would there be for the Bible? But we do need the Bible, because it tells us things we would not otherwise know. In Philippians 2 Paul says,

Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, ¹⁰ that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, ¹¹ and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. (Philippians 2:9-11)

Holy angels delight to worship the Son. Fallen angels don't want to do that, but they will. When they do, it will be too late to do them any good, but they will worship Him all the same. They will admit that's He was right and they were wrong. People, also, will worship the Son. Even if they don't want to do it now, they'll do it eventually. Every knee will bow. So let us submit now, while doing so can still benefit us.

When Christ comes again, in glory, every choice will already have been made and every soul either saved or lost. Now is the time for making choices. At the end of all things the saved will bow before the Son (because He saved them), and the lost will also bow (even though they never wanted to before). Paul says, every knee will bow "and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father" (vs. 11).

Conclusion

Does worshiping the Son take anything away from the Father? This could only be the result if they were two. But Jesus says, "I and the Father are one" (John 10:30). The Father and the Son are also one with the Holy Spirit. These things go beyond unaided human wisdom. That's why we have a Bible – to tell us these things that we would never be able to work out by ourselves.

Does it honor the Father when we honor the Son? When we dishonor the Son, does that dishonor the Father? What Paul says again is that "every tongue [will] confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father" (Philippians 2:11). If we withhold this acknowledgement of the Son, we withhold glory from the Father. The safest course is to let the Bible say what it says and simply accept it. This is the only way to be sure that we're doing the right thing and that our actions are pleasing to God.